

AVATAR

The Last Airbender

Show #320

BOOK THREE: Fire

CHAPTER TWENTY: "Sozin's Comet, Part 3"

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ACT ONE

EXT. SKY - APPA'S BACK - NIGHT (WITH FIERY SKY)

Sozin's comet eerily lights up the night sky with fire -- not quite night, not quite day. Katara pilots Appa. Zuko looks off, distracted.

APPA
(FLYING NOISE)

KATARA
Zuko, don't worry. We can take Azula.

ZUKO
I'm not worried about her. I'm worried about Aang. What if he doesn't have the guts to take out my father? What if he loses?

KATARA
Aang won't lose. He's going to come back. He has to.

EXT. ESTABLISHING - FIRE NATION CAPITAL CITY - NIGHT

INT. AZULA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Azula (wearing a bathrobe) eats cherries as several female servants tend to her -- one servant brushes her hair, while another scrubs her feet, etc. Azula pops another cherry in her mouth and takes a bite. She SPITS out a cherry seed into her hand and holds it up to the servant with the bowl of cherries.

AZULA
What am I holding?

FEMALE SERVANT
A cherry pit, Princess.

AZULA
Correct. And what day is this?

FEMALE SERVANT
It's the day of your coronation.

AZULA
Yes, it is. So please, tell me why, on the most important day of my life, you have decided to leave a pit in my cherry.

FEMALE SERVANT

It wasn't a decision, it was just a small mistake...

AZULA

Small? Do you realize what could have happened if I hadn't sensed the pit in time?

FEMALE SERVANT

I suppose... you could have choked.

AZULA

Yes. Then you understand the severity of your crime.

Servant #2 immediately kneels.

FEMALE SERVANT

I understand, princess. Please -- forgive me.

AZULA

Very well. Since it is a special day, I will show mercy.

(beat)

You are banished. Leave this palace immediately.

The servant exits. The other servants stand in shock.

AZULA (cont'd)

What are you all looking at? I have two feet that need scrubbing.

The servants immediately return to work.

AZULA (cont'd)

And make sure you get in between the toes. I won't have my first day as Firelord marred by poor foot hygiene.

EXT. OCEAN - FIERY NIGHT SKY

Sokka, Toph, and Suki ride the eel-hound as it swims through the water. Sokka and Suki look up at the eerily beautiful fiery sky.

EEL HOUND

(LANDING SOUND)

EEL HOUND (cont'd)

(SOUND)

SUKI

It's weird to say, but the comet
actually looks beautiful.

TOPH

Too bad the Firelord's about to use
it to destroy the world.

The eel-hound swims toward a Fire Nation occupied island in
the distance.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ISLAND AIRSHIP BASE - LATER

The kids crest the top of the mountain and look down on the
fleet of airships, which is already rising up.

SOKKA

We're too late! The fleet's
already taking off!

TOPH

Then we're taking off too. Where's
the closest airship?

SOKKA

It's right--

As soon as Sokka points, Toph grabs Suki and Sokka by the
collar, and Earth-catapults them up underneath it.

SOKKA/SUKI

(SURPRISED YELLS)

TOPH

(OOF)

They land on the catwalk and sneak into the ship, unnoticed.

EXT. SKY ABOVE OCEAN - CONTINUOUS

The camera pulls out from the kids' hiding place to show the
entire fleet flying over the ocean. The Firelord's ship
leads the fleet. (NOTE: this could be a really cool CG shot!)

INT. OZAI'S AIRSHIP - CONTINUOUS

The camera continues moving until it comes to Ozai, who stands at the bow of his airship, looking out over the ocean. He has an evil smirk on his face.

INT. FIRELORD'S WAR ROOM - NIGHT

Azula (still in her bathrobe) sits comfortably on the Firelord's throne. A small regimen of Dai Li agents rushes in.

DAI LI CAPTAIN
You sent for us, Princess? Is everything alright?

AZULA
Actually, everything's not alright. Do you know how long it took you to get here?

DAI LI CAPTAIN
A few minutes, I guess...

AZULA
Five, to be precise. In which time an assassin could have snuck in, done away with me, and be on his merry way.

DAI LI CAPTAIN
My apologies, Princess.

AZULA
Is this how you plan to treat your new Firelord? With tardiness and disloyalty?

DAI LI CAPTAIN
The Dai Li would never betray you.

AZULA
And I'm sure that's just what you told Long Feng before you turned against him and joined me.
(beat)
You're all banished.

DAI LI CAPTAIN
But--

AZULA
Goodbye.

The Dai Li begin to leave.

AZULA (cont'd)
Please send in the next group on
your way out.

INT. AIRSHIP - BRIDGE - THAT MOMENT

The captain and his guards hear a knock at the door and turn to look at it. Suddenly, the door caves in on itself and Toph uses it to form a PROTECTIVE METAL SUIT around her body. Using some special new Sifu-Manuel Metalbending moves, Toph fights through the fire blasts, takes down the captain and his men, and wraps them up in metal. The fight is over in a matter of seconds.

SOKKA
(SMALL SHUSH SOUND)

FN SOLDIER
(OOF SOUND)

SOKKA
(AHHHHH)

SUKI
(AHHHHH)

FNS #2
(AHHHHH)

FNS #3
(AHHHHH)

FNS #4
(AHHHHH)

FNS #4 (cont'd)
(HURTING NOISE)

FNS #4 (cont'd)
(OOF)

TOPH
That's how it's done.

Sokka and Suki run in, visibly impressed.

SOKKA
Good work, Toph. Time to take
control of the ship. Take the
wheel...

TOPH
(sarcastic)
That's great idea! Let the blind
girl steer the giant airship.

SOKKA
I was talking to Suki.

TOPH
That would make a lot more sense.

Suki takes the wheel.

SUKI
What are we going to do about the
rest of the crew?

Sokka thinks about this.

SOKKA
Take us down closer to the water.
I've got an idea.

Sokka gets on the intercom and impersonates the captain.

SOKKA (cont'd)
(deep, manly voice)
Attention, crew! This is your
captain speaking.

INT. AIRSHIP - ENGINE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The crew members stop shoveling coal into the furnaces and
listen to the voice on the intercom.

SOKKA (V.O.)
Everyone please report to the bomb
bay immediately for hot-cakes and
sweet cream. We have a very
special birthday to celebrate!

The burly crew members put down their shovels and exit.

INT. AIRSHIP - BOMB BAY - MOMENTS LATER

The confused crew all gathers in the bomb bay.

CREW MEMBER #1
Hey. I'm Quin Li. I work up in
communications.

CREW MEMBER #2

Oh, hi. I work down in the engine room. That's probably why we never met before. Big airship, you know?

CREW MEMBER #1

Yup. So, do you know whose birthday it is?

Suddenly, a very HAPPY CREW MEMBER enters.

HAPPY CREW MEMBER

I can't believe the captain remembered my birthday! He really does care.

Suddenly, the bomb bay doors open and the crew falls out safely into the water below.

ALL CREW

(SCREAMS)

HAPPY CREW MEMBER

(GASP)

CREW MEMBER #2

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

INT. AIRSHIP - BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

Sokka looks out the window at the Firelord's airship, which is all the way at the front of the fleet.

SOKKA

(determined)

Firelord Ozai, here we come.

Sokka opens up the throttle. The airship rises up, breaking away from the fleet to pursue Ozai's ship.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO**INT. FIRELORD'S WAR ROOM - NIGHT**

Azula (still in her bathrobe) sits comfortably on the Firelord's throne. Azula's is in STAGE 1 MESSY APPEARANCE -- her eyeliner is too dark and her hair is a bit scraggly and unkempt. She looks slightly off from her normally perfect appearance. Lo and Li enter.

LO
Azula, we heard what happened.

LI
Why have you banished all your servants?

LO
...all your Dai Li agents...

LI
...and the Imperial Firebenders?

AZULA
None of them could be trusted.
Sooner or later, they would have
all betrayed me.
(bitter)
Just like Mai and Ty Lee did.

LO AND LI
Azula, we are concerned for you and
your well being.

Azula starts to get suspicious.

AZULA
My father asked you to come here
and talk to me, didn't he?

Azula turns away from them.

AZULA (cont'd)
He thinks I can't handle the
responsibility of being Firelord --
but I will be the greatest leader
in Fire Nation history.

LO
I'm sure you will. But considering
everything that's happened today...

LI
...perhaps it's best if you
postpone your coronation.

Azula is taken off guard by the suggestion. She turns back to face Lo and Li.

AZULA
What? Which one of you just said
that?!

Terrified by Azula, Lo and Li both point at each other.

AZULA (cont'd)
What a shame. There's only one way
to resolve this... you two must
duel each other. I order you to
fight an Agni Kai!

LO
But...

LO AND LI
We're not Firebenders.

AZULA
Alright fine.
(beat, then to Li)
Lo, you're banished.
(to Lo)
Li, you can stay.

Azula exits. Li looks to Lo.

LI
But I'm Li. So who's banished?

They both SHRUG, and exit.

EXT. INNER WALL OF BA SING SE - NIGHT (WITH FIERY SKY)

On the outskirts of the city, the Order of the White Lotus prepares for battle. Uncle stands in front of everyone.

BUMI
Ba Sing Se, the order of the White
Lotus, is here.

PAKKU
Here to set you free.

UNCLE

Only once every hundred years can a Firebender experience this kind of power.

UNCLE (cont'd)

(INHALE/EXHALE)

UNCLE (cont'd)

(EXHALE INTO ATTACK NOISE)

Uncle puts his head down and closes his eyes. INTERCUT: The comet raging in the stratosphere. Uncle gathers his breath, then ROARS out a HUGE FIREBALL which obliterates the gate in front of them.

Uncle, Bumi, Pakku, Jeong Jeong, Piandao, and the other White Lotus members storm the city, taking the Fire Nation soldiers by surprise. With the agility and power of men half their age, the old guys unleash their bending (and swords) on the enemy. We see a few amazing shots highlighting Uncle and the main crew as the battle begins. Due to time and budget, the rest is left to the imagination.

INT. CORONATION TEMPLE - NIGHT

Azula (now in STAGE 2 MESSY APPEARANCE) stands in front of a large mirror, trying to pin up her hair, but it keeps falling in her face.

AZULA

(FRUSTRATED NOISE) Alright, hair.
It's time to face your doom.

Azula picks up some royal scissors and chops off one of her signature bangs.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

What a shame. You always had such beautiful hair.

In the mirror's reflection, Azula sees Ursa standing behind her. Azula is cold towards her mother, but not surprised to see her. (NOTE: The following conversation takes place in the mirror's reflection.)

AZULA

What are you doing here?

URSA

I didn't want to miss my own daughter's coronation.

AZULA

Don't pretend to act proud. I know what you really think of me. You think I'm a monster.

URSA

I think you're confused. All your life, you've used fear to control people. Like your friends, Mai and Ty Lee.

Azula winces from the memory of their betrayal.

AZULA

Well, what choice do I have?! Trust is for fools. Fear is the only reliable way.

Ursa doesn't respond.

AZULA (cont'd)

Even you fear me.

URSA

No. I love you, Azula. I do.

*

AZULA

(SMALLER QUIVERS)

AZULA (cont'd)

(ANGRY ROAR)

AZULA (cont'd)

(QUIET SOBS)

Azula looks away, not sure she can believe this -- a TEAR forms and streams down her cheek, the first time we've seen Azula this way. Then Azula quickly turns and THROWS her brush, SMASHING the mirror. We cut wide to reveal there is no one else in the room. She's been talking to herself the whole time.

EXT. SKY ABOVE OCEAN - CONTINUOUS

Sokka's airship has broken away from the pack and chases Ozai's airship. The camera pans ahead of the pursuit to reveal the Earth Kingdom is within sight.

INT. OZAI'S AIRSHIP - THAT MOMENT

Ozai takes a deep breath.

OZAI
(DEEP BREATH)

INT. AIRSHIP - BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

TELESCOPE P.O.V.: Sokka sees Ozai's ship approaching land.

SOKKA
We're not going to catch up to him
in time!

SUKI
(helpless)
No...

EXT. OZAI'S AIRSHIP - CONTINUOUS

As Ozai's ship crosses from sea to land, Ozai unleashes a huge stream of fire from his mouth, setting the earth ablaze. It seems that Ozai has achieved his goal. But there's one person standing in his way --

EXT. ROCK TOWER - CONTINUOUS

It's Aang! He heroically stands atop an inland mountain, waiting for Ozai's ship to get within striking distance. Momo sits on the ground beside him.

MOMO
(ALARMING SCREAM)

AANG
Momo -- time for you to go.

MOMO
(CHITTERS)

AANG
(INHALE/EXHALE)

Momo obeys and flies off. Aang faces the oncoming airship. As it gets closer, he winds up, and shoots a huge rock that smashes the engine. He follows up with a super-charged blast of fire into the tear in the engine, causing it to explode.

INT. OZAI'S AIRSHIP - CONTINUOUS

Ozai reels from the explosion. As he recovers, he looks out and sees Aang. Using Firebending, he jet-packs out of the burning airship and lands on a rock tower adjacent to Aang. It's a face off.

INT. AIRSHIP - BRIDGE - THAT MOMENT

Through the telescope, Sokka watches with disbelief as Ozai's airship comes to a rest on top of a rock tower, smoke spewing from the engine. (The airship doesn't explode, so the people inside are fine.)

SUKI

What just happened?

SOKKA

It's Aang -- he's back!

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE**EXT. ROCK TOWERS - NIGHT (WITH FIERY SKY)**

Aang and Ozai face each other atop opposing spindly, eroded rock towers under a fiery comet-torn sky. Ozai's massive downed airship spews smoke from a damaged engine behind them. It's the showdown!

PHOENIX KING OZAI

After generations of Firelords
failed to find you, now the
universe delivers you to me as an
act of providence.

AANG

Please listen to me, we don't have
to fight. You have the power to
end it here and stop what you are
doing.

PHOENIX KING OZAI

You are right, I do have the power.
I have all the power in the world!

As Ozai belts out this last line, fire spews from his mouth and fists in his iconic pose, only this time the scale of the blaze is monstrous. He launches into the air with Firebending jet propulsion, whipping the huge blaze around towards Aang, who also launches into the air flinging the tops of two rock towers at Ozai. We SMASH CUT just as their attacks collide!

INT. COMMANDEERED AIRSHIP BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

Sokka and Suki (with Toph) watch the fireworks display that is their friend's epic battle from a mile away as they head in the opposite direction back towards the oncoming fleet.

SOKKA

(giddy)

GO, AANG! AIRBENDING SLICE!

SUKI

Shouldn't we be helping him?

SOKKA

The Firelord is Aang's fight. We
need to stay focused on stopping
that fleet from burning down the
Earth Kingdom.

TOPH

And how do we do that, Captain
Boomerang? I can't see outside of
this floating hunk of metal!

SOKKA

AIRSHIP SLICE!

Sokka takes the wheel from Suki. He flies high and banks their airship toward the outer flank of the V formation, almost as if they are going to fall back in line. Just then the fifteen or so airships reach the shore of the Earth Kingdom and in unison rain a curtain of fire down upon the forest, several hundred feet wide. A swath of devastation is cut through the forest and a raging wildfire spreads even further. The kids' faces glow from the fire.

TOPH

Whoa, that's a lot of fire, isn't
it?

Sokka steers their airship perpendicular to the organized fleet, still a bit higher than the other ships. He starts a descent, pushes the engines to their maximum speed and jams the controls so their airship is locked on a course.

SOKKA

It's going to be a rough ride. We
need to get to the top of this
thing fast.

SUKI

Then what?

SOKKA

Watch each other's backs and if we
make it that far, I'll let you
know.

The three kids make it out of the gondola just as it crashes into the top of the first airship, tearing into its envelope (the metal "blimp" part that holds the helium). As their airship slams into the subsequent airships it grinds down to pieces from the bottom up.

EXT. AIRSHIP - CONTINUOUS

The kids make it outside and stay just ahead of the destruction, racing up to the tip of the airship. Sokka leads Toph by the hand up the horn on the bow, while Suki runs behind them. Suddenly, the bow splinters into pieces and Suki falls into the air.

SOKKA
(AHHHHHH)

SUKI
(SURPRISED YELP)

SOKKA
SUKI!

Suki lands safely on top of a punctured airship, but Sokka and Toph continue to propel forward on the wreckage and they are separated from her. Sokka looks at her desperately as she shrinks in the distance.

SUKI
(OOF SOUND)

SUKI (cont'd)
(yelling from afar)
I'm okay! Just finish the mission!

SOKKA
(sotto)
No...

TOPH
Sokka, I think we've gotta--

Sokka snaps out of it and realizes they have a split second to jump off the wreckage and onto another airship.

SOKKA OR TOPH
(finishing Toph's
sentence)
--JUMP!!!

TOPH AND SOKKA
AAAAHHHHHHHH!!!

They make a daring leap between airships hundreds of feet in the air. We SMASH CUT just as they land.

EXT. CORONATION PLAZA - NIGHT (WITH FIERY SKY)

The entire plaza is deserted, except for the Fire Sages and Azula. Azula kneels in front of the Sages. The High Sage holds up the Firelord headpiece that was used to crown Ozai in 2.07.

HIGH SAGE
By decree of Phoenix King Ozai, I
now crown you Firelord--

The High Sage stops short of placing the headpiece on Azula.

AZULA

What are you waiting for -- do it!

Azula sees what has caught the Sage's attention -- it's Appa!
He lands in the plaza. Zuko jumps off.

APPA

(FLYING NOISE)

ZUKO

Sorry, but you're not going to
become Firelord today. I am.

AZULA

(LAUGHS)

(dismissive)

You're hilarious.

Katara dismounts -- now she and Zuko both face Azula.

KATARA

And you're going down.

The High Sage begins to move the headpiece into place on
Azula's head. But at the last second she stops him.

AZULA

Wait.

(to Zuko)

You want to be Firelord? Fine,
let's settle this -- just you and
me, brother, the showdown that was
always meant to be -- Agni Kai.

Now everyone looks to Zuko -- will he accept her challenge?

ZUKO

You're on.

Azula smiles. Katara is unnerved by Zuko's decision.

KATARA

(sotto to Zuko)

What are you doing? She's playing
you. She knows she can't take us
both so she's trying to separate
us.

ZUKO

(nods)

I know. But I can take her this time.

KATARA

But you even admitted to your uncle that you would need help facing Azula.

ZUKO

There's something off about her. I can't explain it but she's slipping. And this way, no one else has to get hurt.

EXT. CORONATION PLAZA - MOMENTS LATER

Azula and Zuko stand on opposite ends of the plaza, facing away from each other. From nearby, Katara watches as the siblings ceremoniously turn and bow, then take their stances.

AZULA

(very dramatic)

I'm sorry it has to end this way, brother!

ZUKO

No you're not.

And with that, Azula and Zuko begin unleashing their supercharged attacks on each other.

EXT. ROCK TOWERS - NIGHT (WITH FIERY SKY)

Aang and Ozai are in the heat of battle high above the raging forest fire. Like Ozai, Aang has the comet-induced super-Firebending, but he can only muster up fire wall defenses and redirections of Ozai's relentless onslaught. Aang tries to mix up his offense with impressive volleys of Earthbending, Airbending and Waterbending (the later from a nearby waterfall), but Ozai is a rapidly moving target. Aang is using all his best skills acquired over the last months, but they are not yielding results and he is getting frustrated. Ozai dominates the fight and pushes Aang back among the tops of the rock towers.

Ozai steps up his offense by shooting massive bolts of lightning at Aang, who narrowly dodges each attack as the top of the rock towers explode. Ozai corners Aang and shoots his signature quick-draw lightning blast.

AANG
(REACTION TO HITTING WALL)

AANG (cont'd)
(PAINTED STRUGGLING NOISES)

AANG (cont'd)
(TIRED/EXHAUSTED SOUND)

AANG (cont'd)
(FALLING NOISE)

Aang performs the redirecting technique and safely absorbs the lightning. Aang is set to release the lightning at Ozai... but turns and DISCHARGES the blast harmlessly into the sky instead. Ozai realizes Aang doesn't have what it takes.

Aang is weak from the event, and in contrast, Ozai does not waste his own opportunity. He blasts Aang off the rock towers, flinging him down towards the forest fire far below.

EXT. CORONATION PLAZA - NIGHT (WITH FIERY SKY)

We see a wide view of the Royal Palace City with huge fire blasts lighting up the walls of the caldera. Zuko and Azula fight amongst the temples, half of which lay in ruins from their supercharged attacks. Katara runs to keep up with the fight. Much to Azula's dismay, Zuko is actually holding his own against her. This time around, he is confident and cool-headed, where as she is too emotional and irritable.

AZULA
(ATTACKING NOISE)

AZULA (cont'd)
(PANTING NOISE)

ZUKO
(AAAAH)

AZULA
(OOOF/AAAH SOUND)

AZULA (cont'd)
(PANTING NOISE)

ZUKO
(taunting)
No lightning today? What's the
matter, afraid I'll redirect it?

*

AZULA

Oh... I'll show you lightning.

ZUKO

(INHALE)

They both face each other. Azula winds up. Zuko prepares himself to redirect the lightning. Both look completely confident. But after Azula charges up, at the last second she sends the lightning not at Zuko, but at Katara!

ZUKO (cont'd)

No!

Zuko dives into the path and takes the hit to save Katara. It is a desperate self-sacrificing move, and he is not able to redirect all of the lightning. He slides to the edge of the courtyard in critical condition.

ZUKO (cont'd)

(GROANS)

KATARA

Zuko!

Katara tries to rush to Zuko's side, but like a cat playing with its prey, Azula shoots a blast which blocks Katara's path.

AZULA

(SPINE-TINGLING, MADWOMAN'S LAUGH)

EXT. FOREST FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Aang uses Waterbending to break his fall as he crashes into a shallow river. The confidence he exhibited before the fight crumbles and he is reduced to a scared, overwhelmed kid. Aang looks up to see Ozai rocketing down toward him, a vision of fury. Aang retreats into a cocoon-like protective shell made of rock. Ozai reaches the ground and taunts him, lashing at the rock sphere and blasting it around like a pool cue.

AANG

(HEAVING PANTING)

PHOENIX KING OZAI

(COCKY LAUGH) You're weak, just like the rest of your people. They did not deserve to exist in this world -- in my world! Prepare to join them -- prepare to die.

We cut inside the protective sphere to see Aang, desperate and panicked as he struggles to maintain the Earthbending that holds the shell around him.

END OF ACT THREE